# Nigel Farage faces backlash over comments on Ukraine conflict



Nigel Farage, leader of Reform UK, has faced significant backlash after suggesting in a BBC Panorama interview that the west "provoked" Russia into invading Ukraine. Farage attributed the conflict to the eastward expansion of NATO and the EU, which he claimed provided Russian President Vladimir Putin with a justification to attack. Farage reiterated his stance, stating that while Putin’s invasion was wrong, so was the European Union's expansion.

Home Secretary James Cleverly accused Farage of "echoing Putin's vile justification" for the war. Prominent political figures, including former NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson and Labour shadow defence secretary John Healy, criticized Farage's comments as supportive of Kremlin narratives. Healy branded Farage a "Putin apologist," and former defence minister Tobias Ellwood remarked that Putin would be “delighted” by such statements.

Farage's comments highlight a rift between his party and the Conservative stance, led by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, who recently negotiated a £39 billion aid package for Ukraine. Farage's stance has led to widespread condemnation from other political leaders who stress the importance of supporting Ukraine against Russian aggression.